

## Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 COME-00

EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /075 W  
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R 252115Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6435  
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMCONSUL QUEBEC

UNCLAS MONTREAL 1086

E.O. 11652; N/A

TAGS; ELAB , CA

SUBJECT; QUEBEC LABOR LEADER SENTENCED TO JAIL

1. LOUIS LABERGE, INFLUENTIAL LEADER OF POWERFUL QUEBEC FEDERATION OF LABOR (QFL), DREW THREE YEAR JAIL SENTENCE JUNE 20 FOR HAVING INCITED WORKERS TO RIOT LAST YEAR DURING STRIKE AT HUPP CANADA LTD. OF ASSOMPTION, QUEBEC. SPENT WEEKEND IN JAIL PENDING BAIL HEARING; NOW OUT ON BAIL UNTIL APPEAL HEARD IN SEPTEMBER.
2. IN PRONOUNCING SENTENCE, JUDGE MARCEL NICHOLS DELIVERED ESSAY ON PAST ACTIVITIES LABERGE, FOUND HIM "RECIDIVIST" IN RE IRRESPONSIBILITY AS LABOR LEADER, AND SAID SENTENCE WAS INTENDED AS "EXAMPLE" TO OTHER LABOR LEADERS.
3. SENTENCE NATURALLY UNPALATABLE TO LABOR, INCLUDING RELATIVELY-MODERATE JOE MORRIS, HEAD OF CANADIAN LABOR CONGRESS. NOW STARTING DRAW EDITORIAL FIRE, WITH ANGLOPHONE DAILY THE GAZETTE AND FRANCOPHONE DAILIES LE DEVOIR AND LE JOUR ALL AGREEING THAT WHILE THERE WAS PROBABLY NO QUESTION ABOUT LABERGE'S GUILT, THE SENTENCE IS EXCESSIVE AND THE JUDGE ERRED IN NOT CONFINING HIMSELF TO THE FACTS OF THIS PARTICULAR OFFENSE. GAZETTE CALLS SENTENCE "IMMODERATE" AND SAYS IT

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"RAISES QUESTIONS OF EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW AND THE ISSUE

OF POLITICAL PURPOSES TOWARD OTHERS." CLAUDE RYAN IN LE DEVOIR  
WRITES THAT WHILE JUDICIAL SYSTEM PROVIDES APPEAL PROCEDURE  
IT MIGHT BE PREFERABLE, IN CASES OF THIS SOCIAL IMPORTANCE,  
TO HAVE SENTENCE DECIDED BY THREE JUDGES INSTEAD OF ONE.  
ONLY LA PRESSE DOES NOT ENTIRELY DISAPPROVE OF THE SENTENCE.  
WHILE CALLING THE SENTENCE "SURPRISINGLY SEVERE", THE DAILY  
GOES ON TO DEVELOP THEME THAT NO GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER LIBERAL,  
CAN ALLOW ITSELF TO BE CHALLENGED TO THE POINT OF SYSTEMATIC  
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. ACCORDING TO LA PRESSE'S CHIEF EDITORIAL  
WRITER, THE JURY, IN CONVICTING LABERGE, MAY ONLY HAVE  
ECHOED THE RISING POPULAR SENTIMENT AGAINST CURRENT UNION  
MISDEEDS. HARPER

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## Message Attributes

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